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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT CHEN'S NATIONAL DAY
SPEECH

A) "China's Taiwan Affairs Office Fails to Accommodate
President Chen Shui-bian's Soft Landing"

The conservative, pro-unification "United Daily News"
editorialized (10/14):

". Judged from various angles, the statements issued by
China's Taiwan Affairs Office's Wednesday were already
tantamount to a political showdown. Beijing seems to
say that unless President Chen acknowledges the 'one
China' principle and thus establishes a political
premise, it would be meaningless to discuss any future
issues concerning both sides, including the three
links, direct charter flights and other interactions
across the Taiwan Strait - meaning that the door would
be closed for any cross-Strait discussions.

"President Chen's reference to the '1992 Hong Kong
meeting as the basis' [for re-opening cross-Strait
talks] shows that he is also clearly aware that the
'1992 consensus' is the key to resuming cross-Strait
interaction and that he hopes Beijing could accept his
'synonym' to improve on the impasse caused by 'one
China.' But Beijing has refused to accept Chen's
attempt to use '1992 Hong Kong meeting' to replace the
'1992 consensus' in exchange for a 'soft landing.'
Beijing even made a tighter definition [of the '1992
meeting'] and directly called Chen 'deceptive.' For
Beijing, the three direct links and charter flights are
no longer its priorities now, and the 'one China' has
become a political premise that allows no [other]. ."

B) "Chen Uses the United States' 'Patience
Recommendation' to Wait for Ice to Melt [Across the
Taiwan Strait]"

Journalist Lo Chia-wei noted in the conservative, pro-
independence "United Daily News" (10/14):

". President Chen, in response to China's Taiwan
Affairs Office's remarks, said 'the United States has
told us to be patient.' Chen's words have offered a
good beginning for both sides of the Taiwan Strait to
'put aside their disputes.' There may be a chance for
improvements in the cross-Strait situation next spring
if Taiwan's goodwill gestures can last beyond the
legislative elections and Beijing can act in a softer
manner . ."

C) "To Concentrate Taiwan People's 'General Will.'"

DPP Legislator Shen Fu-hsiung said in an op-ed in the
centrist, pro-status quo "China Times" (10/14):

"It is not unexpected that China's Taiwan Affairs
Office would harshly criticize President Chen's
National Day speech. On the surface, it seems that
negotiations and reconciliation between the two sides
of the Taiwan Strait are in the indefinite future. But
for Taiwan, now is the best chance for us to work out a
consensus among ourselves. .

"Even though Chen's speech has failed to win a goodwill
response from Beijing, it still has indicative
significance in coordinating the disputes inside Taiwan
regarding unification and independence. The president
has maximized the possible forms for the future
development of cross-Strait relations - namely, except
for Taiwan independence, there are other options like
forming a federation, confederation, commonwealth, or
even a unified one-China framework. All of these can
cover the majority views held by the Taiwan people.
Chen's move proves that he has broken the blockade of
the fundamentalists regarding cross-Strait issues and
has returned to the pragmatic central route."

D) "Taiwan, Mainland on a Collision Course"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language
"China Post" said in an editorial (10/14):

". By offering to use the 1992 meeting instead of the 1992 consensus as the model for resumed talks, President Chen was in fact denying there was such a consensus.

"The 'one China principle,' which implies that both Taiwan and the mainland are apart of China, was the basis for cross-Strait talks. The Chen administration has been unwilling to acknowledge that there was any such consensus because it runs counter to the ruling party's pro-independence stance.

"The present predicament makes the prospects for cross-strait peace rather dim. The ruling DPP and its allies are determined to bring Taiwan independence to reality. Even some political opponents of the 'green' camp, believing that this can win them more grassroots support, tend to support the independence campaign.

"The trend is putting Taiwan and the mainland on a collision course. Beijing will by no means tolerate the declaration of statehood by the Taipei government. It will do everything possible, including the use of military force, to thwart the movement of Taiwan toward independence."

"Tension in the Taiwan Strait will in all likelihood rise further as the independence advocates aggressively push for the accomplishment of their goal and the Beijing government make intense efforts to stop them. The future of Taiwan has become highly unpredictable, with the possibility of the outbreak of war growing steadily."

E) "The One China Myth Is the Source of Sadness for the Taiwan People"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" editorialized (10/14):

". Today, China has made it very clear that only by sticking to the one China principle can both sides resume talks. The one China principle is a synonym for 'annexing Taiwan.' Therefore the Pan-Blue politicians in Taiwan should cut off their links with the one-China principle, identify with Taiwan and accept democracy, or they will only bring Taiwan towards the tragic ending of war. Taiwan's elected leader should also stop wasting his effort in dealing with China meaninglessly. The only right way is to assert Taiwan's identity and seek a way out for the 23 million people."

PAAL